

Israel kills 42 in Gaza as Netanyahu warns war will go on

GAZA CITY, Gaza Strip (AP)

— Israeli airstrikes on Gaza City flattened three buildings and killed at least 42 people Sunday, Palestinian medics said, in the deadliest single attack in the latest round of violence. Despite the toll and international efforts to broker a cease-fire, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu signaled the fourth war with Gaza's Hamas rulers would rage on.

In a televised address, Netanyahu said the attacks were continuing at "full-force" and would "take time." Israel "wants to levy a heavy price" on the Hamas militant group, he said, flanked by his defense minister and political rival, Benny Gantz, in a show of unity.

Hamas also pressed on, launching rockets from civilian areas in Gaza toward civilian areas in Israel. One slammed into a synagogue in the southern city of Ashkelon hours before evening services for the Jewish holiday of Shavuot, Israeli emergency services said. No injuries were reported.

In the Israeli air assault early Sunday, families were buried under piles of cement rubble and twisted rebar. A yellow canary lay crushed on the ground. Shards of glass and debris covered streets blocks away from the major downtown thoroughfare where the three buildings were hit over the course of five minutes around 1 a.m.

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A woman reacts while standing near the rubble of a building that was destroyed by an Israeli airstrike on Saturday that housed The Associated Press, broadcaster Al-Jazeera and other media outlets, in Gaza City, Sunday, May 16, 2021.

Associated Press

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Refugees arriving in U.S. unlikely to exceed cap set by Trump

By **JULIE WATSON and MATTHEW LEE**

Associated Press

SAN DIEGO (AP) — President Joe Biden, under political pressure, agreed to admit four times as many refugees this budget year as his predecessor did, but resettlement agencies concede the number actually allowed into the U.S. will be closer to the record-low cap of 15,000 set by former President Donald Trump.

Refugee advocates say they are grateful for the increase because it's symbolically important to show the world the United States is back as a humanitarian leader at a time when the number of refugees worldwide is the highest since World War II. But they're frustrated, too, because more refugees could have been admitted if Biden hadn't dragged his feet.

"About 10,000 to 15,000 is what we're expecting," said Jenny Yang of World Relief, adding that Biden's inaction for months after taking office in January was "definitely problematic."

"That delay meant not being able to process refugee applications for four months. We weren't able to rebuild for four months, so it really was unfortunate," Yang said.

Biden first proposed raising the cap to 62,500 in February in a plan submitted to Congress, but then refused to sign off on it for two months before coming back April 16 and suggesting he was sticking with Trump's target.

Democratic allies and refugee advocates lambasted him, saying he was reneging on his campaign promise in the face of bipartisan criticism over his handling of an increase in unaccompanied migrant children at the U.S.-Mexico border.

"To be clear: The asylum process at the southern border and the refugee process are completely separate immigration systems.

Conflating the two constitutes caving to the politics of fear," said Democratic Sen. Richard Blumenthal of Connecticut, a member of

the Senate Judiciary Committee.

Weeks later, on May 3,

With a family history that includes two step-parents who fled Europe during

reporters this month.

The Office of Refugee Resettlement also has been

navirus pandemic.

Due to travel restrictions in and out of refugee processing sites worldwide, the U.S. suspended refugee arrivals from March 19 to July 29 of last year except for emergency cases. Only 11,800 refugees were admitted in the 2020 fiscal year, the lowest number in the history of the program.

The administration is working on rehiring that staff and addressing the backlog, including by making it possible to conduct interviews by video teleconferencing instead of doing them in person, deputy State Department spokeswoman Jalina Porter said.

But it can take months to train new officers.

The government is also trying to tackle the layers of vetting put in place by the Trump administration, which brought the process nearly to a standstill and required, for instance, that refugees submit 10 years of addresses, something nearly impossible to do for people who have been on the move.

Biden has pledged money to expand the operations of resettlement agencies, which are paid by the federal government per refugee served. With the refugee numbers way down, the agencies were forced to close about 100 offices nationwide during the Trump administration.

Some agencies so far have only been able to cobble together a few dozen qualified people after losing their experienced staff.

They also need time to re-establish their partnerships with landlords, employers and others who have helped refugees get established in communities, a challenge with increasing housing prices and other added constraints related to the pandemic.

The "sad truth" Biden warned when he finally set the target at 62,500 is that goal won't be achieved.

Instead, the administration and advocates are working to fix the program by 2022 when Biden has promised to raise the ceiling to 125,000. □



In this Tuesday, Feb. 2, 2021, file photo, Secretary of Homeland Security Alejandro Mayorkas looks on as President Joe Biden signs an executive order on immigration, in the Oval Office of the White House in Washington.

Associated Press

Biden raised the cap.

So far this year only about 2,500 refugees have arrived, with less than five months left before the fiscal year ends on Sept. 30.

More than 35,000 refugees have been vetted and approved to come to the United States, but thousands were disqualified under the narrow eligibility criteria Trump established in October when he set the low cap.

By the time Biden expanded the eligibility, many health screenings and documents were no longer valid, according to resettlement agencies. And if someone had a baby during that time, then the entire family could be stalled. Even under the best circumstances, it can take two months for each case to be updated.

Before the Trump administration's drastic cuts, the United States had admitted more refugees each year than all other countries combined under a program now 41 years old.

and after WWII, Secretary of State Antony Blinken pushed to restore that leadership by significantly boosting the cap in the early days of the administration.

The State Department recommended to the White House the ceiling be set at 62,500, officials said.

But a senior official familiar with Blinken's thinking said it quickly became clear that the State Department officers responsible for refugee resettlement had been so gutted that they wouldn't be able to process and absorb that number of refugees.

The official, who spoke on condition of anonymity because he was not authorized to speak publicly about the matter, described the situation as "aspiration meeting reality" and said Blinken reluctantly concluded that 62,500 wouldn't be possible in the short term.

"It turned out there was even more damage done than we knew," Blinken told

taxed by the jump in unaccompanied migrant children coming to the U.S. border, according to the administration. Some \$85 million was diverted from refugee resettlement money to help care for the children, government documents published by The New York Times show.

Biden did not want to promise something he wasn't sure was possible, Blinken said.

"So we needed to take some time to make sure that the resources were in place, the people were in place, the programs were in place to actually receive refugees coming in," he said.

The Trump administration had cut U.S. staff overseas who interview refugees by 117 officers. As a result, the number of interviews that were conducted fell by one-third in 2019 compared with those done in 2016 under the Obama administration. That number fell off almost entirely in 2020 because of the coro-

Minneapolis suburb OKs roadmap for policing changes

BROOKLYN CENTER, Minn.

(AP) — Elected officials in a Minneapolis suburb where a police officer fatally shot Daunte Wright during a traffic stop in April approved a resolution that puts the city on track to major changes to its policing practices.

The Brooklyn Center City Council voted 4-1 Saturday in favor of a resolution that would create new divisions of unarmed civilian employees to handle non-moving traffic violations and respond to mental health crises. It also limits situations in which officers can make arrests and requires more de-escalation efforts by police before using deadly force. In addition, a new Department of Community Safety and Violence Prevention would be formed to oversee efforts on community health and public safety, led by a director with public health expertise.

The city attorney and mayor have said that adopting the resolution commits the city to change, though it is not a final action.

The resolution "will establish a new north star for our community, one that will keep all of us safe," said Brooklyn Center Mayor



In this April 14, 2021, file photo, police shine lights on a demonstrator with raised hands during a protest outside the Brooklyn Center Police Department on in Brooklyn Center, Minn., over the fatal shooting of Daunte Wright.

Associated Press

Mike Elliott. "It says that we, as your elected leaders, are committing ourselves. And that you can hold us accountable for achieving those goals."

Elliott introduced the resolution last week, less than a month after then-Brooklyn Center Officer Kim Potter, who is white, fatally shot Wright, a 20-year-old Black motorist. The city's police chief, who has since stepped down, has said he

believed Potter meant to use her Taser on Wright during the April 11 stop instead of her handgun. Body camera video shows her shouting "Taser!" multiple times before firing. The shooting ignited days of unrest.

Council Members Marquita Butler, April Graves and Dan Ryan joined Elliott in voting for the resolution. Council Member Kris Lawrence-Anderson voted against it, saying that the council

hadn't taken enough time to weigh the proposal, the Minneapolis Star Tribune reported.

The three-hour meeting included testimony from Wright's family as well as the family of Kobe Dimock-Heisler, who also was killed by Brooklyn Center police. "I truly believe if this was implemented prior to April 11, our son would still be with us today," said Katie Wright, Daunte's mother.

Potter, who is charged with second-degree manslaughter in his death, resigned within days of the shooting. Police have said Wright was pulled over for expired tags, but they sought to arrest him after discovering an outstanding warrant. The warrant was for his failure to appear in court on charges that he fled from officers and had a gun without a permit during an encounter with Minneapolis police in June.

Dozens of citizens spoke at Saturday's council meeting. In one tense moment, a man said he didn't agree with having unarmed people pull over drivers. He then turned to Wright and said: "Your son was killed, not because of a traffic stop in my mind. But because he had warrants." The man was drowned out by boos.

The American Civil Liberties Union of Minnesota called the proposal "an important first move" in changing policing. But several police groups have raised concerns, saying parts of the resolution conflict with state law and will put public safety at risk.

No police officers spoke at Saturday's meeting. □

Fauci says pandemic exposed 'undeniable effects of racism'

ATLANTA (AP) — The immunologist who leads the COVID-19 response in the United States said Sunday that "the undeniable effects of racism" have led to unacceptable health disparities that especially hurt African Americans, Hispanics and Native Americans during the pandemic.

"COVID-19 has shone a bright light on our own society's failings," Dr. Anthony Fauci said during a graduation ceremony for Emory University.

Speaking by webcast from Washington, Fauci told the graduates in Atlanta that many members of minority groups work in essential jobs where they might be exposed to the coronavirus. He also said

they are more likely to become infected if exposed because of medical conditions such as hypertension, chronic lung disease, diabetes or obesity.

"Now, very few of these comorbidities have racial determinants," Fauci said. "Almost all relate to the social determinants of health dating back to disadvantageous conditions that some people of color find themselves in from birth regarding the availability of an adequate diet, access to health care and the undeniable effects of racism in our society."

Fauci said that once society returns to "some form of normality," people should not forget that infectious disease has disproportionately hospitalized

and killed people of color. Fauci on Sunday was awarded the Emory University president's medal. Previous recipients include former President Jimmy Carter, the Dalai Lama and the late U.S. Rep. John Lewis, a civil rights icon. In accepting the award, Fauci denounced the destruction of division.

"Societal divisiveness is counterproductive in a pandemic," Fauci said. "We must not be at odds with each other since the virus is the enemy, not each other."

He praised the graduates for handling the profound disruption of the pandemic.

"Not since the influenza pandemic of 1918 has humanity faced a public



Dr. Anthony Fauci, director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, speaks during a Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions hearing to examine an update from Federal officials on efforts to combat COVID-19, Tuesday, May 11, 2021 on Capitol Hill in Washington.

Associated Press

health crisis of this magnitude," he said. "Each of you deserves enormous respect for your extraordinary adaptability, resili-

ence and dedication to learning, completing your studies and graduating despite immense difficulties and uncertainties." □

U.S. rail industry defends safety record amid staffing cuts

By JOSH FUNK

AP Business Writer

OMAHA, Neb. (AP) — Even as railroads are operating longer and longer freight trains that sometimes stretch for miles, the companies have drastically reduced staffing levels, prompting unions to warn that moves meant to increase profits could endanger safety and even result in disasters.

More than 22% of the jobs at railroads Union Pacific, CSX and Norfolk Southern have been eliminated since 2017, when CSX implemented a cost-cutting system called Precision Scheduled Railroading that most other U.S. railroads later copied. BNSF, the largest U.S. railroad and the only one that hasn't expressly adopted that model, has still made staff cuts to improve efficiency and remain competitive.

The railroads acknowledge they have cut staff, lengthened trains and made other adjustments to reduce spending, but they are adamant none of the changes increase dangers. Regulators at the Federal Railroad Administration say they are tracking the changes and that the data so far does not show the new operating model is unsafe. But unions counter that with the stakes so high any time a train derailed, the



In this April 2, 2021, file photo train consists are formed at Norfolk and Southern Railroad's Conway Yard in Conway, Pa.

Associated Press

new system is risky. "Every time the wheels come off the rail, it's kind of like buying a lottery ticket to the big disaster," said Jason Cox with the carmen division of the Transportation Communications Union. Precision Scheduled Railroading calls for running fewer, longer trains with a mix of freight to reduce the number of crews and locomotives needed to deliver millions of tons of goods nationwide. The railroads also operate their trains on more of a set schedule now, with fewer stops and

pickups, and they have eliminated shorter, less-profitable routes. By increasing the length of trains, railroads can reduce total trips, cut down on the number of engines and railcars needing maintenance, and manage with fewer employees. Some trains now stretch longer than 2 miles (3.2 kilometers). Union Pacific said the average of its maximum train length has grown more than 30% to 9,250 feet, which is 1.75 miles (2.8 kilometers), since it started using the new operating

model in 2018, and the railroad is expanding track sidings throughout its network to accommodate much longer trains. The railroads say they abide by federal regulations for car and signal inspections and that human inspections are supplemented by high-tech systems that can scan tracks and railcars for defects. They also say safety has improved overall over the past five years. All the major railroads issued statements defending their safety records and citing invest-

ments they have made in their networks.

"Across the board, I do not see evidence of our workforce at Union Pacific being rushed, overworked or put in harm's way. I just don't see it statistically," said Lance Fritz, CEO of Union Pacific, the nation's second-largest railroad.

CSX officials said most of the key safety measures they track like employee injuries and train accidents have improved since it started using the Precision Scheduled Railroading operating model.

"We do not move freight at the expense of the safety of our employees or the communities where we operate," CSX spokeswoman Cindy Schild said.

The head of the House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, Oregon Democratic Rep. Peter DeFazio, last week asked the Government Accountability Office to study Precision Scheduled Railroading's impact on safety and the industry overall. Independent expert David Clarke, director of the University of Tennessee's Center for Transportation Research, said the safety data is inconclusive.

"Right now I just haven't seen anything to demonstrate that it's definitely having a negative impact on safety," Clarke said. □

Crews battle Los Angeles wildfire that forced evacuations



A firefighter keeps watch as a firefighting helicopter drops water on a brush fire scorching at least 100 acres in the Pacific Palisades area of Los Angeles on Saturday, May 15, 2021.

Associated Press

By CHRISTOPHER WEBER

Associated Press

LOS ANGELES (AP) — A

smoky wildfire churning through a Los Angeles canyon community gained

strength Sunday as about a thousand residents remained under evacuation orders, authorities said.

Cooler weather early in the day gave firefighters a break, but by afternoon flames starting moving again in steep terrain where tinder-dry vegetation hasn't burned in a half-century, the Los Angeles Fire Department said.

"We're definitely seeing increased fire activity," said department spokeswoman Margaret Stewart.

No structures were damaged and no injuries were reported in the wildfire that broke out late Friday in the Santa Monica Mountains.

It smoldered for much of Saturday before erupting in the afternoon.

A thousand or so residents of the Topanga Canyon area were ordered to evacuate their homes as flames raced along ridges, sending a huge plume of smoke and raining ash across surrounding neighborhoods and the U.S. 101 freeway to the north.

By midday Sunday the fire had charred about 2 square miles (5.1 square kilometers) of brush and trees. There was no containment.

Los Angeles has seen very little rain in recent months, making for extremely

parched conditions and high fire risk. The cause of the fire near Topanga State Park has been deemed "suspicious" and is under investigation, the fire department said. There were reports of a possible arson suspect spotted in the area Saturday, but a search by the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department didn't find anyone, Stewart said.

Crews relied on aircraft making drops of water and retardant because "the terrain is very steep and extremely difficult to navigate which hinders ground based firefighting operations," a fire department statement said. □

Continued from Front

The hostilities have repeatedly escalated over the past week, marking the worst fighting in the territory that is home to 2 million Palestinians since Israel and Hamas' devastating 2014 war.

"I have not seen this level of destruction through my 14 years of work," said Samir al-Khatib, an emergency rescue official in Gaza. "Not even in the 2014 war."

Rescuers furiously dug through the rubble using excavators and bulldozers amid clouds of heavy dust. One shouted "Can you hear me?" into a hole. "Are you OK?" he asked. Minutes later, first responders pulled a survivor out. The Gaza Health Ministry said 16 women and 10 children were among those killed, with more than 50 people wounded.

Haya Abdelal, 21, who lives in a building next to one that was destroyed, said she was sleeping when the airstrikes sent her fleeing into the street. She accused Israel of not giving its usual warning to residents to leave before launching such an attack. "We are tired," she said, "We need a truce. We can't bear it anymore."

The Israeli army spokesperson's office said the strike targeted Hamas "underground military infrastructure." As a result of the strike, "the underground facility collapsed, causing the civilian houses' foundations above them to collapse as well, leading to unintended casualties," it said.

Among those reported killed was Dr. Ayman Abu Al-Ouf, the head of the internal medicine department at Shifa Hospital and a senior member of the hospital's coronavirus management committee. Two of Abu Al-Ouf's teenage children and two other family members were also buried under the rubble.

The death of the 51-year-old physician "was a huge loss at a very sensitive time," said Mohammed Abu Selmia, the director of Shifa. Gaza's health care system, already gutted by an Israeli and Egyptian blockade imposed after Hamas seized power from rival Palestinian



Israeli police scuffle with protesters in the Sheikh Jarrah neighborhood of east Jerusalem Saturday, May 15, 2021.

Associated Press

forces in 2007, had been struggling with a surge in coronavirus infections even before the latest conflict.

Israel's airstrikes have leveled a number of Gaza City's tallest office and residential buildings, alleging they contain Hamas military infrastructure. Among them was the building housing The Associated Press office and those of other media outlets.

Sally Buzbee, the AP's executive editor, called for an independent investigation into the airstrike that destroyed the AP office on Saturday.

Netanyahu alleged that Hamas military intelligence was operating inside the building and said Sunday that Israel had shared what it said was evidence of Hamas' presence through intelligence channels. Neither the White House nor the State Department would say if any American official had seen it.

"It's a perfectly legitimate target," Netanyahu told CBS's Face the Nation.

Asked if he had provided any evidence of Hamas' presence in the building in a call Saturday with U.S. President Joe Biden, Netanyahu said: "We pass it through our intelligence people."

Buzbee called for any such evidence to be laid out.

"We are in a conflict situation," Buzbee said. "We do not take sides in that conflict. We heard Israelis say they have evidence; we don't know what that evidence is."

The AP had operated from the building for 15 years, including through three previous wars between Israel and Hamas. The news agency's cameras, operating from its top floor office and roof terrace, offered 24-hour live shots as militants' rockets arched toward Israel and Israeli airstrikes hammered the city and its surroundings.

"We think it's appropriate at this point for there to be an independent look at what happened yesterday — an independent investigation," Buzbee said.

The latest outbreak of violence began in east Jerusalem last month, when Palestinians clashed with police in response to Israeli police tactics during Ramadan and the threatened eviction of dozens of Palestinian families by Jewish set-

tlers. A focus of the clashes was the Al-Aqsa Mosque, a frequent flashpoint located on a hilltop compound revered by both Muslims and Jews.

Hamas began firing rockets toward Jerusalem on Monday, triggering the Israeli assault on Gaza.

At least 188 Palestinians have been killed in the hundreds of airstrikes in Gaza, including 55 children and 33 women, with 1,230 people wounded. Eight people in Israel have been killed in some of the 3,100 rocket attacks launched from Gaza, including a 5-year-old boy and a soldier.

Hamas and the Islamic Jihad militant group have acknowledged 20 fighters killed in the fighting. Israel says the real number is far higher and has released the names and photos of two dozen alleged operatives it says were "eliminated."

The assault has displaced some 34,000 Palestinians from their homes, U.N. Middle East envoy Tor Wennesland

told an emergency meeting of the U.N. Security Council, where eight foreign ministers spoke about the conflict.

Efforts by China, Norway and Tunisia to get the U.N. body to issue a statement, including a call for the cessation of hostilities, have been blocked by the United States, which, according to diplomats, is concerned it could interfere with diplomatic efforts to stop the violence.

Palestinian Foreign Minister Riad Al-Malki urged the Security Council to take action to end Israeli attacks. Israel's U.N. ambassador, Gilad Erdan, urged the council to condemn Hamas' "indiscriminate and unprovoked attacks."

The turmoil has also fueled protests in the occupied West Bank and stoked violence within Israel between its Jewish and Arab citizens, with clashes and vigilante attacks on people and property.

On Sunday, a driver rammed into an Israeli checkpoint in the east Jerusalem neighborhood of Sheikh Jarrah — where Palestinian families have been threatened with eviction — injuring six officers before police shot and killed the attacker, Israeli police said. The violence also sparked pro-Palestinian protests in cities across Europe and the United States.

Israel appears to have stepped up strikes in recent days to inflict as much damage as possible on Hamas as international mediators work to end the fighting and stave off an Israeli ground invasion in Gaza. The Israeli military said it destroyed the home Sunday of Gaza's top Hamas leader, Yahiyeh Sinwar, in the southern town of Khan Younis. It was the third such attack in the last two days on the homes of senior Hamas leaders, who have gone underground. □



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Myanmar junta attacks western town that resisted coup

By GRANT PECK

Associated Press

BANGKOK (AP) — The U.S. and British embassies in Myanmar expressed concern about reports of fierce government attacks on a town in western Chin state, where the ruling junta declared martial law because of armed resistance to military rule.

The fighting began around 6 a.m. Saturday when government troops reinforced by helicopters began shelling the western part of the town of Mindat, destroying several homes, said a spokesman of the Chinland Defence Force. It is a locally formed militia group opposed to the February coup that ousted the elected government of Aung San Suu Kyi.

Helicopters also took part in the attack, according to the spokesman, who spoke on condition of anonymity for security reasons.

"Mindat town is now under siege and is bracing for an all-out assault by the junta troops from air and by land," said a statement by the Chin Human Rights Organization.

The shadow National Unity Government, set up by lawmakers who were blocked by the army from taking their seats in Parliament, warned that "within the next 48 hours, Mindat can potentially become a battleground and thousands of people are fac-



Anti-coup protesters flash the three-finger salute during a demonstration in Yangon, Myanmar, Friday, May 14, 2021.

ing the danger of being displaced." Many have already left the town of about 50,000 people, said a resident contacted by phone who was also fleeing.

The Mindat Township People's Administration, another opposition grouping, claimed that 15 young men had been seized by government troops and used as human shields. It said at least five defenders of the town had been killed in clashes and at least 10 others wounded.

None of these details could be independently verified, but a Myanmar state television broadcast Saturday night reported that fight-

ing was going on, and acknowledged the town's defenders have been putting up stiff resistance against the army.

"The military's use of weapons of war against civilians, including this week in Mindat, is a further demonstration of the depths the regime will sink to to hold onto power," the British Embassy said on Twitter. "We call on the military to cease violence against civilians." The U.S. Embassy said it was "aware of increasing violence in Mindat, including reports of the military shooting civilians," and urged that evidence of atrocities be sent to U.N. investigators.

Detailed tallies compiled by several different watchdog groups say government security forces have killed upwards of 750 protesters and bystanders as they have tried to suppress opposition to the military's seizure of power. In April, security forces were accused of killing more than 80 people in one day to destroy street barricades that militants had set up as strongholds in the city of Bago.

In many or most cases, police and soldiers were trying to break up peaceful protests, though as they increased the use of lethal force, some protesters fought back in self-defense. In recent weeks there has

been an upsurge in small bombings in many cities, mostly causing little damage and few casualties.

The junta says the death toll is less than 300, and the use of force was justified to quash what it calls riots.

Mindat's resisters are only lightly armed, mostly with a traditional type of single-shot hunting rifle, but the territory around the town is mountainous and wooded, favoring defenders over attackers.

The report on state television MRTV listed past attacks on government forces and installations, most recently on Thursday, when it claimed a force of about 100 blocked security forces from entering the town, destroying one vehicle and leaving an unspecified number of security forces dead and missing.

In a later attack, it said, an even bigger force was said to have launched an attack from the city on security forces patrolling nearby, destroying six vehicles and causing an unspecified number of government casualties.

The opposition government earlier this month announced a plan to unify groups such as the Chinland Defense Force into a national "People's Defense Force," which would serve as a precursor to a "Federal Union Army" of democratic forces including ethnic minorities. □

Severe cyclone heading toward southern India; 6 dead



A police officer holds an umbrella to protect himself from the rain as he enforces a lockdown to curb the spread of the coronavirus in Kochi, Kerala state, India, Sunday, May 16, 2021.

Associated Press

NEW DELHI (AP) — A severe cyclone is roaring in the Arabian Sea off southwestern India with winds of up to 140 kph (87 mph), already causing heavy rains and flooding that have killed at least six people, officials said Sunday.

Cyclone Tauktae, the season's first major storm, is expected to make landfall early Tuesday in Gujarat state, a statement by the India Meteorological Department said.

The massive storm will likely hamper India's fight against a coronavirus surge that's sweeping the country with devastating death

tolls, as virus lockdown measures may slow relief work and damage from the storm could potentially destroy roads and cut vital supply lines.

In areas along the Arabian Sea coast, four people were killed and 73 villages badly damaged on Sunday, according to the southwestern Karnataka state's disaster management authority.

A woman was killed when a coconut tree fell on her and a man riding a scooter was hit by an uprooted electric pole in the western state of Goa lashed by stormy winds and heavy

rains, said Pramod Sawant, the state's top elected official.

Nearly 2,500 government rescuer workers have been deployed in six states on Cyclone Tauktae's path — Kerala, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Gujarat, Maharashtra and Goa — equipped with wireless radios, satellite phones, cutters and tools needed for post-cyclone operations.

The storm, moving at a speed of 11 kph (7 mph), was currently 660 kilometers (410 miles) south-southeast of Veraval in Gujarat state, the India Meteorological Department said. □

Afghan cease-fire ends amid calls for fresh peace talks

By KATHY GANNON and
TAMEEM AKHGAR
Associated Press

KABUL, Afghanistan (AP)

— A three-day cease-fire marked by violent attacks — most claimed by the Islamic State group — ended Sunday in Afghanistan amid calls for renewed peace talks between the government and Taliban.

Taliban political spokesman Suhail Shaheen said the negotiating teams of the government and the Islamic Emirate, as the Taliban refer to their ousted regime, met briefly Saturday in the Middle Eastern State of Qatar. They renewed their commitment to finding a peaceful end to the war and called for an early start to talks that have been stalled, he said.

The U.S. has been pressing for accelerated talks as it withdraws the last of its 2,500-3,500 soldiers and NATO its remaining 7,000 allied forces.

Even as the Taliban and government signed on to the cease-fire, which was declared to mark the Islamic holiday of Eid-al-Fitr, violence continued unabated in Afghanistan. A bombing Friday in a mosque north of the capital killed 12 worshippers, including the prayer leader. Another 15 people were wounded. The Taliban denied involvement



Schoolgirls sit inside a classroom with bouquets of flowers on empty desks as a tribute to those killed in the brutal May 8 bombing of the Syed Al-Shahda girls school, in Kabul, Afghanistan, Sunday, May 16, 2021.

Associated Press

and blamed the government intelligence agency. In a statement Sunday, the IS affiliate took responsibility for the mosque attack, saying its fighters planted an explosive device in "a worship place for disbelievers Sufis," killing the "apostate Imam," or prayer leader. The statement claimed 40 worshippers were wounded. The IS also claimed it blew up several electrical grid stations over the weekend. That left the capital Kabul in the dark for much of the three-day holiday that fol-

lowed the Muslim fasting month of Ramadan.

In posts on its affiliated websites, IS claimed additional attacks over the last two weeks that destroyed 13 electrical grid stations in several provinces. The stations bring imported power from the Central Asian countries of Uzbekistan and Tajikistan.

The attacks have left nine provinces including Kabul with disrupted power supplies, said Sanger Niazai, a government spokesman. There was also concern

that local warlords, demanding protection money from the government to safeguard stations in areas they control, may have been behind some of the destruction.

At least one local warlord was arrested last year after demanding protection money.

On Sunday in the mostly Shiite neighborhood of Dasht-e-Barchi, parents of scores of young girls killed in a brutal May 8 bombing demonstrated to demand the government provide

them with greater security. They said 90 people were killed, most of them students of Syed Al-Shahda girls school, in the bombings outside the school. No one took responsibility but the IS affiliate has declared war on the country's minority Shiites.

The seemingly unstoppable violence in Afghanistan has residents and regional countries fearful the final withdrawal of U.S. and NATO soldiers could lead to further chaos. Washington said it wants its last soldier out of Afghanistan by Sept. 11 at the latest, but the withdrawal is progressing quickly and a Western official familiar with the exit said it is likely to be completed by early July. He spoke on condition of anonymity because details of the withdrawal are not being made public.

On Saturday, China's Foreign Minister Wang Yi expressed concern about the rapid withdrawal of U.S. and NATO forces in a phone call with Pakistan Foreign Minister Shah Mehmood Qureshi.

Wang called the withdrawal hasty and warned it would "severely" impact the Afghan peace process and negatively affect regional stability. He called on the United Nations to play a greater role. □

Israeli paramedics: 2 dead in synagogue bleacher collapse

By ILAN BEN ZION
Associated Press

JERUSALEM (AP) —

Israeli medics said at least two people were killed and more than 150 injured after a bleacher collapsed at an uncompleted West Bank synagogue on Sunday, the eve of a major Jewish holiday.

The bleacher was packed with ultra-Orthodox worshippers and collapsed during prayers at the beginning of Shavuot. A spokesman for Magen David Adom told Channel 13 that paramedics had treated over 157 people for injuries and pronounced two dead, a man in his 50s and a 12-year-old boy.

Rescue workers were on the scene, treating the injured and taking people to the hospital. The collapse comes weeks after 45 ultra-Orthodox Jews were killed in a stampede at a religious festival in northern Israel.

The Israeli military said in a statement that it dispatched medics and other search and rescue troops to assist at the scene. Army helicopters were airlifting the injured.

Amateur footage showed the collapse Sunday during evening prayers in Givat Zeev, a West Bank settlement just north of Jerusalem. The ultra-Orthodox synagogue was packed with hundreds of people.

Shavuot is a spring harvest festival that also marks the day in the Jewish calendar on which the Torah was given to Moses on Mount Sinai. It is traditionally marked with all-night Torah study and the consumption of dairy.

The mayor of Givat Zeev said the building was unfinished and dangerous, and that the police had ignored previous calls to take action. Jerusalem police chief Doron Turgeman said the disaster was a case of "negligence" and that there would likely be arrests.

Television footage from the scene showed the five-story building was incomplete,



An empty synagogue is seen in Givat Zeev, outside Jerusalem, Sunday, May 16, 2021.

Associated Press

with exposed concrete, rebar, and wooden boards, and plastic sheeting as windows. A sign in Hebrew

pasted to a wall of the building warned that "for safety reasons entrance to the site is forbidden." □

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Loyal guests honored at Divi Phoenix

PALM BEACH - Kimberley Richardson of the Aruba Tourism Authority had the great pleasure to honor Aruba's loyal and friendly visitors as Distinguished Visitors of Aruba as well as Goodwill Ambassadors of Aruba. The symbolic Distinguished visitor certificate is presented on behalf of the Minister of Tourism, as a token of appreciation to the guests who visit Aruba 10 years and more consecutively and the Goodwill Ambassador certificate is presented to guests who visit Aruba 20 years or more consecutively.

The honorees were the lovely couple Mr. Mike & Mrs. Beth Aimone as Distinguished Visitors of Aruba, and the lovely couple Mr. Ronald & Mrs. Marilyn Kreuger as Goodwill

Ambassadors of Aruba. All these wonderful faithful visitors all are from USA!

This lovely group of people stated that they love the island very much, especially for its year-round sunny weather, nice sandy beaches and picturesque sunsets, delicious variety of foods, its cleanliness, and Aruba's warm and friendly people whom became like family to them.

Richardson together with the representatives of the Divi Aruba Phoenix presented the certificates to the honorees, handed over some presents and also thanked them for choosing Aruba as their favorite vacation destination and as their home-away-from-home. □



World Telecommunication Day 2021

Adapt & Embrace
Digital Transformation

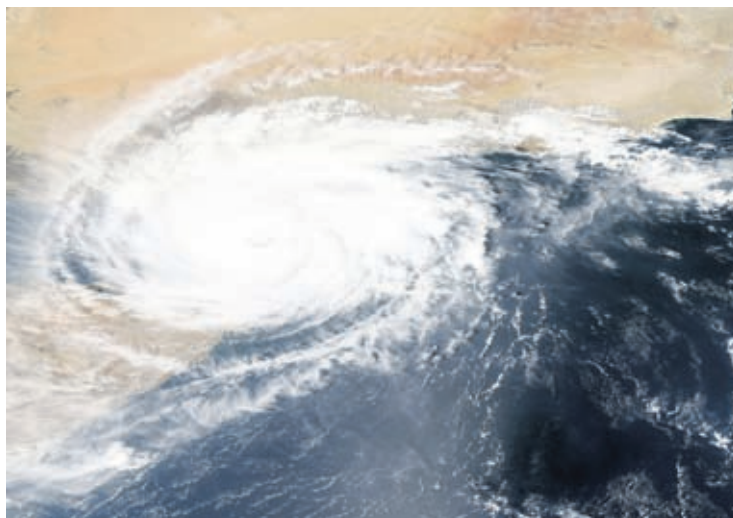


SETAR

AHATA releases Hurricane Preparedness Guide 2021

ORANJESTAD – The Aruba Hotel & Tourism Association has distributed their 'Hurricane Preparedness Guide 2021' to help its members plan for the upcoming hurricane season.

The 2021 Atlantic hurricane season will officially begin on June 1, 2021, and end on November 30, 2021. With 2020 marking the 6th consecutive year in a row that a named storm was



formed before the official beginning of hurricane season, the National Hurricane Center (NHC) will provide routine forecasts starting May 15. This means that all residents, companies, and institutions should be alert earlier than the usual June 1 date.

Despite the fact that Aruba is below the hurricane belt, we are not exempt from them and must take

it seriously and prepare. According to this year's forecast, this season will be above average and 'very active'. AHATA's Hurricane Preparedness Guide was approved by Aruba's Crisis Management Bureau (Bureau Rampenbestijding) and has been distributed to all 125 members, with the hope that companies review the document thoroughly and prepare for potential hurricane activity. □

Covid-19: the status on Aruba

ORANJESTAD — Rules and protocols are being reviewed and evaluated on a daily basis and adapted as per current situation by a crisis team, in order to protect each and every one visiting and residing our island.

Current numbers

There are currently 96 active Covid cases on the island. 82 residents and 14 non-residents. There are 19 persons hospitalized of which 7 of them are in the Intensive care unit. 101 persons lost their battle against the Covid virus of which 1 of them

is a non-resident. A total of 157.193 persons have been tested of which 107.185 were tested at the airport. 56% of the total population have been vaccinated. Aiming for 85% of the total population by end of June 2021.

Measurement by the Government of Aruba

Valid as of Monday May 10th, 2021 until further notice.

- Curfew is from 12 midnight to 4.30am.
- Closing time for businesses is 11pm.

- Max eight (8) per table indoors & max ten (10) per table outdoors (excluding children under the age of 12) Tables must be at least 1.5 meters apart.
- During live performance 5 musicians are allowed to perform on stage.
- No musical events that are intended to attract customers.
- Background music is allowed/ No dancing.
- Hotels and lodgings are exempted from the closing time, BUT only to serve their registered guests between 12am

and 4.30am.

- Casinos are not part of the exemption and must close at 11pm.
- There is no more public gathering ban but people must still wear masks and social distance when required.
- Beaches and public parking lots remain restricted zones and nobody is allowed on them between 7:30pm to 4.30am.

More information on travel and health requirements can be found on www.aruba.com. □

Digital transformation in challenging times

ORANJESTAD - Today, May 17 is "World Telecommunication and Information Society Day". This day is celebrated worldwide by International Communication Union (ITU) who specializes in information and communication technol-

ogy (ICT's). This year ITU focusses on the theme "Digital transformation in challenging times".

Covid-19 crisis emphasized not only on the role of ICT's for the functioning of societies, but it also

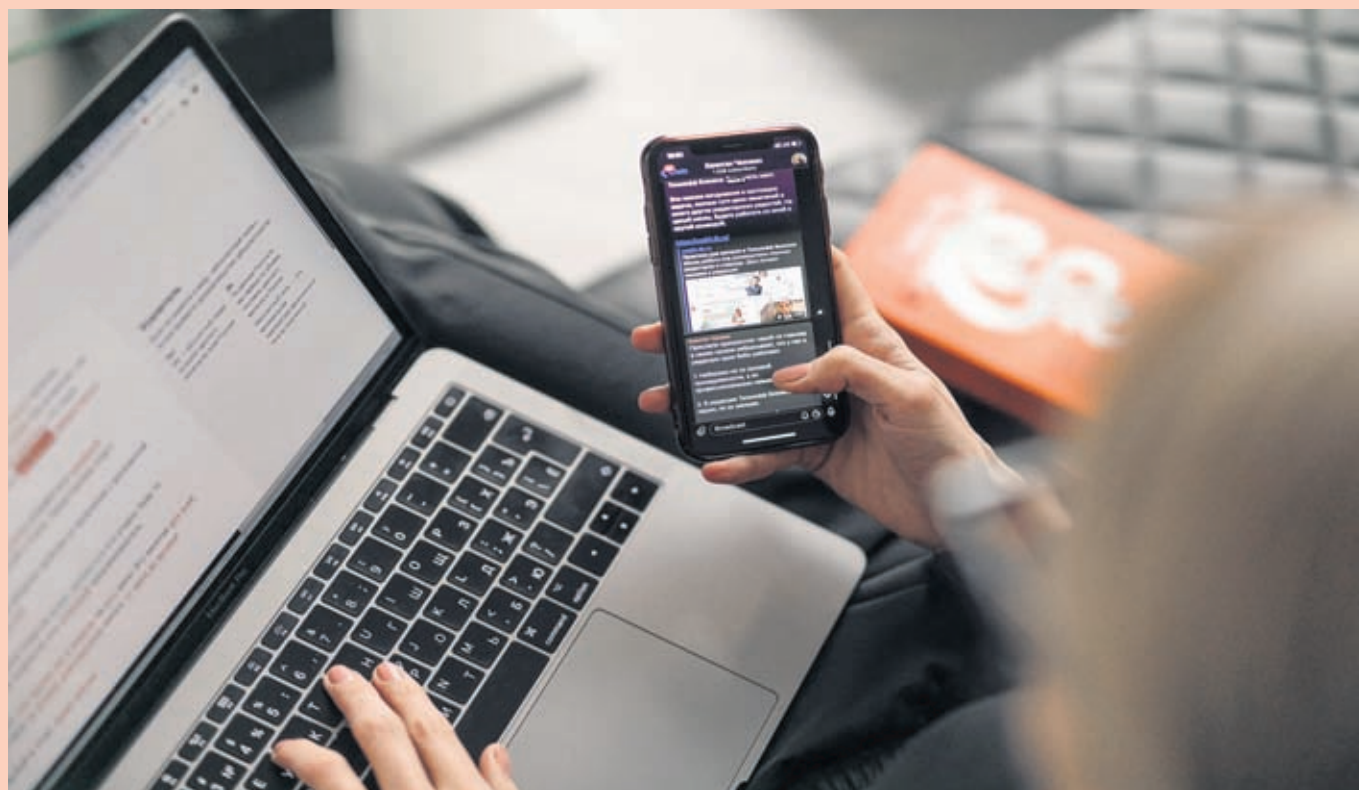
brought forward the digital inequality among countries around the world and the urgency of speeding up the digital transformation.

In Aruba we also experienced

this when we had to adapt ourselves in a short period of time, for example by working from home, online classes, shopping and paying online. Advances that were suppose to go gradually had to be accelerated in a relative short time in the new normal.

SETAR as company also had to adapt fast and embrace the new opportunities this situation brought for the organization. A very special project we are very proud of contributing with in a short time is the Aruba Health App. This application proves to be a significant solution that can administer various aspects related to covid-19 for both our locals and visitors.

As our national company of telecommunication Setar plays a very important role in offering our community a reliable connection at all times and contributes to the digital transformation of our island by offering the latest innovation new and technologies in order for us to advance together. □



IRS to the rescue? Tax audits eyed for infrastructure cash

By KEVIN FREKING and
MARCY GORDON
Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Republicans say they won't raise taxes on corporations. Democrats say they won't raise taxes on people making less than \$400,000 a year. So who is going to pay for the big public works boost that lawmakers and President Joe Biden say is necessary for the country? Enter the IRS.

Biden is proposing that Congress build up the depleted and often-maligned agency, saying that a more aggressive collection of unpaid taxes could help cover the cost of his multi-trillion-dollar plan to boost infrastructure, families and education. More resources to boost audits of businesses, estates and the wealthy would raise \$700 billion over 10 years, the White House estimates.

It's just the latest idea emerging in the bipartisan talks over an infrastructure bill, which saw Biden huddle at the White House this week with congressional leaders and a group of Republican senators. The GOP senators, touting a \$568 billion infrastructure plan of their own, said they were "encouraged" by the discussion with Biden, but all sides acknowledged that how to pay for the public works plan remains a difficult problem.

House Speaker Nancy Pelosi said Biden brought up his IRS proposal as he met Wednesday with the top four congressional leaders. "My understanding is it's at least \$1 trillion, it could be a trillion-and-a-quarter, a trillion-and-a-half dollars of illegally, unpaid taxes in the country," Pelosi said. "Part of the answer is to beef up the IRS so they could take in those taxes, and that's a big chunk. That could go a long way."

She was referring to the tax gap, which is the difference between taxes paid and taxes owed. In a politically charged climate, there isn't agreement on how big the tax gap is, let alone how much of it could be captured. But it's a tan-



In this photo March 22, 2013 file photo, the exterior of the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) building in Washington.

talizing target for lawmakers, raising the potential to raise hundreds of billions in revenue without needing to raise taxes at all.

The question is how big the tax gap really is — and how much it can realistically be closed.

The Internal Revenue Service has estimated the tax gap is \$440 billion per year. But IRS Commissioner Charles Rettig stunned his audience at a recent Senate hearing when he offered a new number: about \$1 trillion annually.

The old estimates don't take into account the recent boom in income made by self-employed "gig" workers, which can be underreported, concealed offshore income and the rising use of cryptocurrency, which makes it hard for the IRS to identify taxpayers in third-party transactions, experts say.

The \$1 trillion figure "is not crazy. That's totally possible," says Steve Wamhoff, director of federal tax policy at the left-leaning Institute on Taxation and Economic Policy.

But Sen. Mike Crapo of Idaho, the senior Republican on the Senate Finance Committee, called it "speculation." And he's worried it

could push the IRS toward overzealous enforcement.

"It would be detrimental if IRS efforts do not strike the appropriate balance between taxpayer responsibilities and taxpayer rights," Crapo told Rettig in a letter this week.

The IRS has been on the losing end of congressional funding fights in recent years, taking a cut of about 20% since 2010, adjusting for inflation, even as its responsibilities have grown. Biden's new spending proposals include an extra \$80 billion over 10 years to bolster IRS audits of upper-income individuals and corporations.

But some experts say bolstered audits could fall far short of a \$700 billion windfall. The Penn Wharton Budget Model, a research organization associated with the University of Pennsylvania, projects the proposed spending on IRS collection

efforts would bring in about \$480 billion from 2022 to 2031.

In selling its plan, the White House has emphasized what it describes as fixing a "two-tiered system of tax administration" in the U.S. While regular workers pay taxes on the wages they earn, some wealthy taxpayers find ways to maneuver around them.

Those with annual incomes under \$25,000 are audited at a higher rate (0.69%) than those with incomes up to \$500,000 (0.53%), according to IRS data. Taxpayers who receive the earned-income tax credit, which applies mainly to low-income workers with children, are audited at a higher rate than all but the very wealthiest filers. The audit rate for millionaires plunged from 8.4% in 2010 to 2.4% in 2019.

The IRS rejects the notion of unfair audit treatment, say-

ing that critics have misinterpreted the data. Rettig bristled at the suggestion at the Senate hearing. High-income taxpayers "are audited more than any other taxpayer," he said, at a rate over 8% for those earning more than \$10 million.

So far, Republicans are only ruling out revisiting the 2017 tax cuts that they passed without any Democratic support. How much they are willing to boost the IRS as part of an infrastructure bill remains to be seen. Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell of Kentucky said Republicans would rather finance infrastructure through user fees such as tolls and gasoline taxes. But after pushing the agency's steep budget cuts over the past decade, it would be a remarkable shift for the GOP to back the kind of sustained investment in the IRS that Biden is talking about — and that experts say is necessary to narrow the tax gap.

Republican lawmakers with control over funding for the IRS have long accused it of overreaching into ordinary taxpayers' lives. Their hostility toward the IRS exploded into outrage in 2013 during the Obama administration, when the agency admitted having targeted conservative tea party groups with heightened, often burdensome scrutiny when they applied for tax-exempt status.

Sen. Chuck Grassley, R-Iowa, wrote in his home state newspaper, the Des Moines Register, that he's not opposed to closing the tax gap, but he has concerns about the scope of the White House's efforts.

"Instead of promising a chicken in every pot, Biden's plan promises an auditor at every kitchen table," Grassley wrote. □



Groups call for reintroduction of jaguars in U.S. Southwest

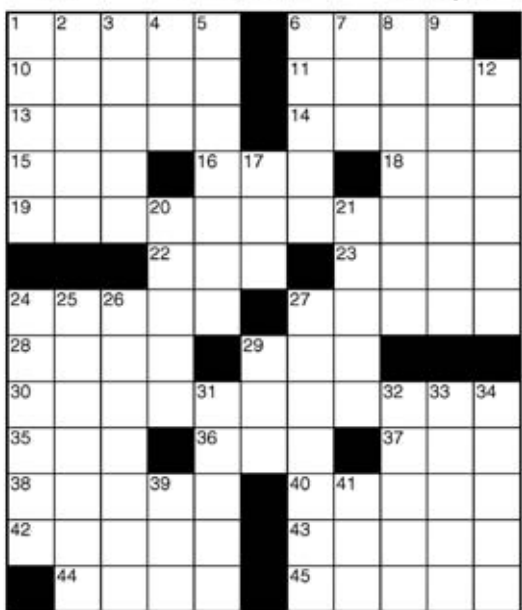
By SUSAN MONTOYA BRYAN Associated Press
ALBUQUERQUE, N.M. (AP)

CROSSWORD

By THOMAS JOSEPH

ACROSS 40 Person with clip-on promise
6 Fizzy drink 42 "Tomorrow"
10 Deluxe musical hotel room 43 Plain to see
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13 Monastery 45 Squander head

DOWN 1 Writer Asimov
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3 Himalayan land
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8 Large letter at the start of a chapter
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21 Scent
24 Leaping antelope
25 Lasses
26 Pennsylvania city
27 Source of easy money
29 Old auto
31 Garden aids
32 Is furious
33 Unmoving
34 Rich cake
39 Wee bite
41 Future embryos



5-17

AXYDLBAAXR
is LONGFELLOW

One letter stands for another. In this sample, A is used for the three L's, X for the two O's, etc. Single letters, apostrophes, the length and formation of the words are all hints. Each day the code letters are different.

5-17

CRYPTOQUOTE

MX YCLXGK XEPC MFJG BC
ECUCV TEXB BQFD JM
CEXAOQ AEDJW BC TEXB
BQFD'M YXVC DQFE CEXAOQ.

— LJWWJC QXWJGFK

Saturday's Cryptoquote: I WAS A GREAT READER OF FAIRY TALES. I TRIED TO READ THE ENTIRE FAIRY TALE SECTION OF THE LIBRARY.
— BEVERLY CLEARY



Saturday's answer



In this undated file photo a jaguar is shown.

Associated Press

— Environmental groups and scientists with two universities want U.S. wildlife managers to consider reintroducing jaguars to the American Southwest.

In a recently published paper, they say habitat destruction, highways and existing segments of the border wall mean that natural reestablishment of the large cats north of the U.S.-Mexico boundary would be unlikely over the next century without human intervention.

Jaguars are currently found in 19 countries, but biologists have said the animals have lost more than half of their historic range from South and Central America into the southwestern United States largely due to hunting and habitat loss.

Several individual male jaguars have been spotted in Arizona and New Mexico over the last two decades but there's no evidence of breeding pairs establishing territories beyond northern Mexico. Most recently, a male jaguar was spotted just south of the border and another was seen in Arizona in January.

Scientists and experts with the Wildlife Conservation Society, the Center for Landscape Conservation, Defenders of Wildlife, the Center for Biological Diversity and other organizations are pointing to about 3,125 square miles (nearly 8,100 square kilometers) of suitable habitat in the mountains of central Arizona and New Mexico that could potentially support anywhere from 90 to 150 jaguars.

They contend that reintroducing the cats is essential to species conservation and restoration of the region's ecosystem.

"We are attempting to start a new conversation around jaguar recovery, and this would be a project that would be decades in the making," Sharon Wilcox of Defenders of Wildlife, one of the study's authors, said in an interview. "There are ecological dimensions, human dimensions that would need to be addressed in a truly collaborative manner. There would need to be a number of stakeholders who would want to be at the table in order to see this project move forward."

Under a recovery plan finalized by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Mexico as well as countries in Central and South America are primarily responsible for monitoring jaguar movements within their territory. The agency has noted that the Southwestern U.S. represents just one-tenth of 1% of the jaguar's historic range.

Environmentalists have criticized the plan, saying the U.S. government overlooked opportunities for recovery north of the international border.

While the recovery plan doesn't call for reintroductions in the U.S., federal officials have said efforts will continue to focus on sustaining habitat, eliminating poaching and improving social acceptance to accommodate those cats that find their way across the border.

The habitat highlighted by

the conservation groups is rugged and made up mostly of federally managed land. They say it includes water sources, suitable cover and prey.

Fish and Wildlife Service biologists have yet to review the latest study, but such a proposal would likely face fierce opposition from ranchers and some rural residents who have been at odds with environmentalists and the Fish and Wildlife Service over the reintroduction of Mexican gray wolves. That program has faced numerous challenges over the past two decades and while wolf numbers are trending upward, ranchers say so are livestock deaths.

Jaguar advocates said losses could be mitigated through compensation programs like those established as a result of the wolf program.

Then there's the question of where the jaguars would come from. Advocates say a captive breeding program could be developed over time and jaguars from existing wild populations could be relocated.

Wilcox said there are many factors — some understood and others still being studied — that influence the movement of jaguars.

"But this is a vast area with suitable vegetation," she said. "It's populated with the right kind of prey for these cats and given its elevation and its latitude, it might provide an important climate refugium for the species in the future."

□

**ARUBA
CLEAN**



**IS MORE
DUSHI**

U.S. joins global push against violent extremism online

By NICK PERRY

Associated Press

WELLINGTON, New Zealand (AP) —

Two years after a white supremacist in New Zealand livestreamed the slaughter of 51 Muslim worshippers on Facebook, French President Emmanuel Macron says the internet continues to be used by terrorists as a weapon to propagate hate.

Macron and other leaders from tech giants and governments around the world — including the U.S. for the first time — gathered virtually on Saturday to find better ways to stop extremist violence from spreading online, while also respecting freedom of expression.

It was part of a global effort started by Macron and New Zealand Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern after deadly attacks in their countries were streamed or shared on social networks. The U.S. government and four other countries joined the effort, known as the Christchurch Call, for the first time this year. It involves some 50 nations plus tech companies including Google, Facebook, Twitter and Amazon, and is named for the New Zealand city where the slaughter at the two mosques took place.

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New Zealand Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern speaks during a press conference in Wellington, New Zealand, Saturday, May 15, 2021, following an online call to find ways to stop extremist violence from spreading online while also respecting freedom of expression.

Associated Press

British Prime Minister Boris Johnson said in a prerecorded video that authorities in his country alone had taken down more than 300,000 pieces of terrorist material from the internet over the past decade, which he described as a tsunami of hate.

"Terrorist content is like a metastasizing tumor within the internet, or series of tumors," Johnson said. "If we fail to excise it, it will inevitably spread into homes and high streets the world over."

Since its launch, governments and tech companies have cooperated in some cases in identifying violent extremist content online. Ardern, however, said more tangible progress is needed to stop it from proliferating.

The meeting was aimed at revitalizing coordination efforts, notably since President Joe Biden entered office, and getting more tech companies involved. Macron and Ardern welcomed the U.S. decision as a potential catalyst for stronger action.

Macron said the internet had continued to be used as a tool in recent attacks in the U.S., Vienna, Germany and elsewhere. He said it cannot happen again, and that new European regulations against extremist content would help.

Ardern said that two years after the Christchurch Call was launched, momentum was strong. But she acknowledged the challenge in essentially playing whac-a-mole with different countries, internet

platforms and algorithms that can foster extremist content.

"The existence of algorithms themselves is not necessarily the problem, it's whether or not they are being ethically used," Ardern said. "And so that is probably the biggest focus for the Call community over the next year."

She said part of the solution also came in better equipping a younger generation of internet users to have the skills to deal with radical content or disinformation when they encounter it online. □



Editor

Caribbean Speed Printers N.V.
Aruba Bank N.V. Acc. #332668
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Assistant Director

Xiomara Arends

Editors

Liza Koolman (Management assistant)

Richard Brooks

Linda Reijnders

Sales

Linda Reijnders

(linda.reijnders@cspnv.com)

Sulaika Croes

Classifieds

classified@cspnv.com

Distribution and Collection

accounting@bondia.com

Social / Website

Juan Luis Pinto

Pilar Flores

Columnists

Anthony Croes

Joris Zantvoort

Thais Franken

Weststraat 22
T: 582-7800

E: news@arubatoday.com

W: www.arubatoday.com

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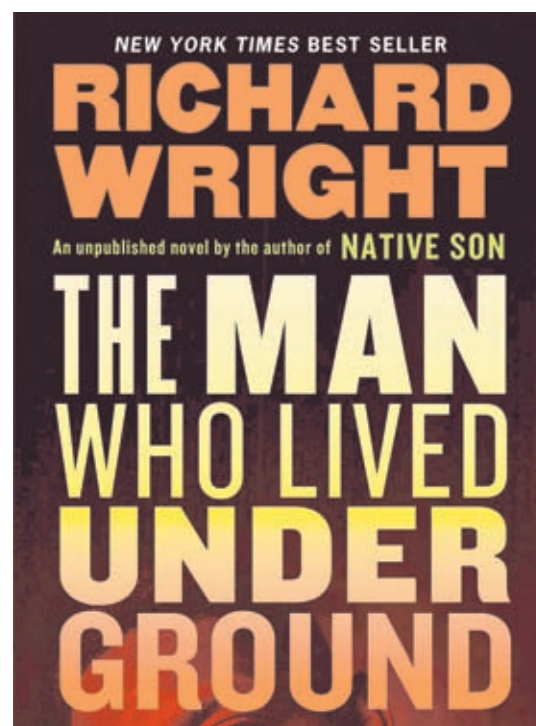
Restored Richard Wright novel hits bestseller lists

NEW YORK (AP) — More than 60 years after his death, Richard Wright is again a bestselling author and very much in line with the present.

"The Man Who Lived Underground," a short novel written in the 1940s and never published in full until this spring, is the surreal but credible story of a Black man who is tortured by police into confessing to a double murder he didn't commit. He escapes into the city's sewer system. Like an inversion of the American road novel or a tale of space travel, Fred Daniels inhabits a world outside the world, making up the rules as he goes along and seeing his old life in a new way. At one point, he breaks into a real estate office that collects money from poor Black people. Daniels finds a wad of money, and helps himself to a typewriter, radio and cleaver, among other items.

"He did not feel that he was stealing, for the cleaver, the radio, and the money were on the same level of value, all meant the same thing to him," Wright observes. "They were the toys of the men who lived in the dead world of sunshine and rain he had left, the world that had condemned him."

Released by the Library of America, an unofficial canon of the country's literature, "The Man Who Lived Underground" also includes the Wright essay "Memo-



This combination of photos shows the cover image for "The Man Who Lived Underground," left, and author Richard Wright. Associated Press



ries of My Grandmother" and an afterword from his grandson, the writer-filmmaker Malcolm Wright. The novel has reached the bestseller lists of The New York Times and the independent booksellers' Indiebound among others, and has brought new attention to an author defined, sometimes to his detriment, by his famed debut "Native Son."

Countless students have been assigned Wright's 1940 narrative about the poor young Black Chicagoan, Bigger Thomas, who in a state of panic murders a rich white girl, later murders his Black girlfriend and is tried and sentenced to death. The rare work by a

Black writer to be featured by the Book of the Month Club, "Native Son" was among the most famous works of its time, and Bigger became a symbol of the damage done by a racist society.

But Wright's standing was challenged in the late '40s by James Baldwin, then an emerging writer, who criticized "Native Son" as simplistic "protest" fiction and wrote that Wright had failed to present Black life "as a continuing and complex group reality."

Kiese Laymon, whose works include the acclaimed memoir "Heavy," is among the current writers who admire "The Man Who Lived Underground" and believe

it will change Wright's legacy.

"It gives us a lot from Wright that we haven't seen before," says Laymon, who, like Wright, is a Mississippi native. "It's almost like a meta novel. Fred is experimenting, and you can see that Wright's desire is to discover and experiment."

Charlie Braxton, a Mississippi-based poet and playwright, said his initial reaction to the book was anger at what happens to Daniels. But he was inspired by Wright's use of a "psychological crime thriller" to serve "as a profound critique of racism/white supremacy and capitalism," and also touch upon organized religion and its role in

"the exploitation of Black people."

Wright worked on the book not long after "Native Son" came out, drawing on the true story of a Los Angeles man who lived for more than a year in the city's sewers; on memories of his Seventh Day Adventist grandmother; and on the "Invisible Man" films of the 1930s and '40s, a theme which predates by several years Ralph Ellison's classic novel "Invisible Man."

Wright's publisher, Harper, turned "The Man Who Lived Underground" down, with one reader finding the author's depiction of police violence against Daniels "unbearable." A shortened version of the novel, without Daniels' initial encounter with the police, was published in a 1944 story anthology and appeared in a collection of Wright's work that came out in 1961, a year after his death.

The revival of "The Man Who Lived Underground" began more than a decade ago, when the author's daughter and literary executor Julia Wright wanted to unearth some of his unpublished work. She was a prisoners' rights activist at the time, met with Mumia Abu-Jamal and other death row inmates, and followed closely the stories of police shootings of people of color, and the dismemberment of James Byrd by a gang of white supremacists. □



In this photo provided by the Chris Loomis, singer Alice Cooper stands by his Andy Warhol red acrylic and silkscreen on canvas called "Little Electric Chair" at the Larsen Gallery in Scottsdale, Ariz., on Wednesday, May 12, 2021.

Associated Press

Rock legend Alice Cooper to auction off Andy Warhol artwork

SCOTTSDALE, Ariz. (AP) — An Andy Warhol canvas found years ago in the garage of rocker Alice Cooper could become the highest selling artwork ever in Arizona.

The music legend, who has a home in metro Phoenix, announced Thursday that he would auction off "Little Electric Chair."

It will be up for bidding on Oct. 23 at an auction organized by the Larsen Gallery in Scottsdale. The

gallery estimates it could fetch anywhere from \$2.5 million to \$4.5 million.

The red acrylic and silkscreen on canvas was part of Warhol's "Death and Disaster" series between 1964 and 1965. The pop artist often collected images from newspapers and magazines to use as inspiration for his work. Among them were images of the electric chair.

According to Cooper, the artwork was a birthday gift

in the '70s from a girlfriend who was friends with Warhol. Cooper also plans to make the canvas available for public viewing.

The gallery owners say they will donate part of any commission to Cooper's nonprofit, Solid Rock, which works to bring music, dance and other forms of art to teens.

Cooper is known for outrageous makeup and performances and such hits as "School's Out." □

Nadal beats a tired Djokovic for 10th Italian Open title

By ANDREW DAMPF

AP Sports Writer

ROME (AP) — Rafael Nadal beat a tired Novak Djokovic 7-5, 1-6, 6-3 for a record-extending 10th Italian Open title on Sunday.

The Spaniard recovered from a potentially dangerous fall after tripping over a raised line to take the latest installment of the most-played rivalry in modern men's tennis.

"To have this trophy in my hands for the 10th time is something hard to believe," Nadal said, recalling how he won his first title at the Foro Italico in 2005 as an 18-year-old, when he beat Guillermo Coria in a match lasting more than five hours. "Now, 16 years later, to play in the final again is incredible," Nadal said in Italian during the trophy presentation. "It's difficult to describe. Without a doubt this is one of the most important places in my career."

The title also re-established Nadal as the overwhelming favorite for the French Open, where he will be aiming for an even harder-to-believe 14th title starting in two weeks.

Nadal beat Djokovic in straight sets in last year's Ro-



Spain's Rafael Nadal celebrates after defeating Serbia's Novak Djokovic at their final match of the Italian Open tennis tournament, in Rome, Sunday, May 16, 2021. Nadal won 7-5, 1-6, 6-3.

Associated Press

land Garros final.

The top-ranked Djokovic spent nearly five hours on court Saturday, when he had to rally for a rain-delayed quarterfinal victory over Stefanos Tsitsipas before winning another three-setter over local favorite Lorenzo Sonego in the semifinals. Nadal played only

once on Saturday, beating Reilly Opelka in 1 ½ hours.

In the women's final, reigning French Open champion Iga Swiatek routed Karolina Pliskova with a "double bagel" 6-0 6-0.

It was the 57th meeting between Nadal and Djokovic, which is the most matches between two men in the

Open era. It was also their ninth meeting in Rome, where they have played more than anywhere else. Djokovic now holds the slimmest of edges in the all-time series, 29-28, while Nadal holds a 6-3 advantage in Rome overall and 4-2 in Rome finals.

The 10,500-seat Campo

Centrale stadium was only a quarter full due to the coronavirus pandemic. But those lucky few in attendance on an overcast day at the Foro Italico made themselves heard, shouting Djokovic's nickname, "Nole, Nole," on the big points, or "C'mon Rafa."

For the second time this week, Nadal tripped over a line that appeared slightly raised on the center court of the Foro Italico. The incident, which resulted in a bloody scrape near the Spaniard's left knee, made Nadal livid.

At 3-3 in the first set, Nadal chased down a short ball from Djokovic and whipped a cross-court passing shot for a winner.

Then his momentum made him slide into the doubles alley and his left foot tripped over the outside line, causing him to roll over onto the clay.

Nadal got up immediately and jabbed his arm into the air angrily and had a word with the chair umpire, who called on court workers to hammer the line further into the clay court.

Nadal had a similar fall in his quarterfinal victory over Alexander Zverev. □

Bernal claims 1st Grand Tour stage win to take Giro lead

CAMPO FELICE, Italy (AP)

— Former Tour de France champion Egan Bernal showed just why he is one of the favorites to win the Giro d'Italia as he stormed to victory Sunday on the ninth stage to also claim the leader's pink jersey.

Bernal, who rides for Ineos Grenadiers, attacked with about 500 meters remaining on the summit finish in the first top-categorized climb of this year's race. Bernal passed the two previous leaders to claim his first stage win in a Grand Tour.

It is the first year Bernal has participated in the Italian race.

"I've already cried twice," an emotional Bernal said immediately afterward. "I cannot believe what just happened, I just won my

first stage in a Grand Tour. I made a lot of sacrifices to get where I am now.

"I was thinking I would do well today but I was not sure whether I could have won the stage. My teammates had a lot of confidence in me, they told me I could do it. This victory is for them, they really believe in me." Bernal had come close to a stage victory in the 2019 Tour de France — which he won — as he was leading Stage 19 when it was abruptly cut short by a violent hailstorm and landslide. Times were taken from the top of what proved to be the final climb and there was no official stage winner.

The 24-year-old Bernal finally got his win on Sunday as he finished seven seconds ahead of Giulio Cic-

cone and Aleksandr Vlasov at the end of the 158-kilometer (98-mile) route from Castel di Sangro to the ski resort of Campo Felice. The stage featured three other categorized climbs as well as the final tough ascent on gravel roads.

There was a scare on the descent of the first climb of the day as Matej Mohorič lost his balance and crashed, landing on his head and snapping his bicycle in two. The Slovenian cyclist swiftly got to his feet and seemed to consider getting on a replacement bike before being taken to the hospital in an ambulance.

His Bahrain Victorious team had already lost leader Mikel Landa as he was forced to abandon the Giro after a crash on Stage



Egan Bernal wins the ninth stage of the Giro d'Italia cycling race, from Castel di Sangro to Campo Felice, Italy, Sunday, May 16, 2021.

Associated Press

4. Bernal took over the race lead from Attila Valter, who was dropped on the final climb. The Colombian has a 15-second lead over Remco Evenepoel and is 21 seconds ahead of Vlasov.

Monday's 10th stage is an undulating 139-kilometer (86-mile) route from L'Aquila to Foligno. The first rest day is on Tuesday.

The Giro finishes on May 30 in Milan with an individual time trial. □



Kyoung-Hoon Lee of South Korea stands in a pouring rain as he lines up his putt on the ninth green during the final round of the AT&T Byron Nelson golf tournament in McKinney, Texas, Sunday, May 16, 2021.

Associated Press

K.H. Lee gets 1st PGA Tour win at Nelson, qualifies for PGA

McKINNEY, Texas (AP) — K.H. Lee was more than happy to play through a steady downpour in the final round of the AT&T Byron Nelson, and didn't mind waiting out a weather delay of more than two hours Sunday.

The reward was the final spot next week in the PGA Championship.

Lee earned his first PGA Tour

victory and the chance to compete on the Ocean Course at Kiawah Island in South Carolina, becoming the second consecutive Nelson winner from South Korea by finishing at 25 under, three ahead of third-round leader Sam Burns.

Heavy rain fell most of the back nine for the leaders, with puddles showing up on greens over the final holes

and one ball in the fairway stuck in the middle of a fast-moving stream. The players slogged through the deluge before lightning forced a delay. Most of the standing water was gone when play resumed two hours and 23 minutes later. Lee missed a par putt on No. 16 to cut his lead to two, but answered with two birdies. The sun came out just as Lee was finishing his 6-under 66.

Burns struggled to a 71 to finish at 22 under, a shot ahead of 2011 Masters champion Charl Schwartzel, Daniel Berger, Patton Kizzire and Scott Stallings. Troy Merritt and Joseph Bramlett finished two more back at 19 under.

When the delay hit, Jordan Spieth already knew he was going to fall short again in his hometown event, played on its third course in the past four Nelsons at the rain-soaked TPC Craig Ranch in McKinney, about 30 miles north of Dallas. Spieth, three back to start the day, shot 71 and tied for ninth, giving him his first top 10 at the Nelson 11 years after he was a contender on Sunday as a 16-year-old when the course was at its home of more than 30 years at the TPC Four Seasons.

South Korea's Sung Kang was the defending champion after winning in 2019, when the second of just two Nelsons was played at the treeless links course Trinity Forest in Dallas. The move was unpopular with fans and players, and Craig Ranch became the home following last year's COVID-19 cancellation.

One thing about this Nelson was the same, though: notorious spring weather in Texas. □

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